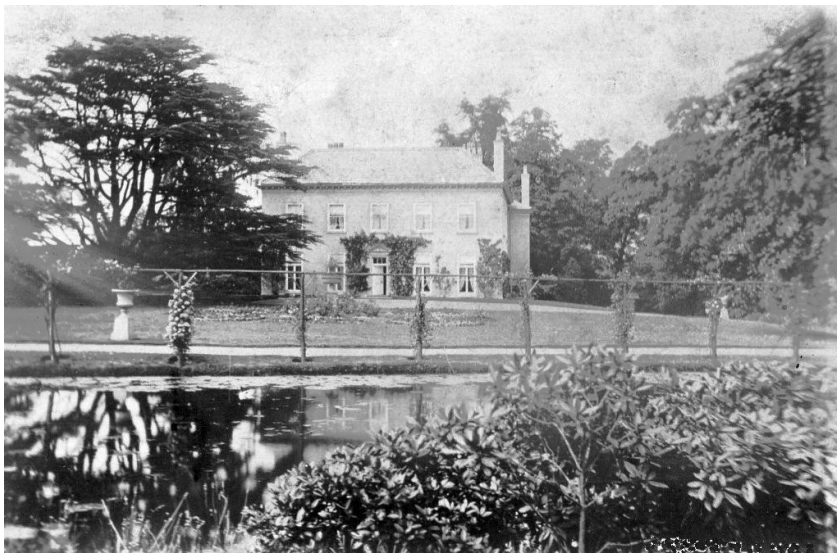
Farnsfield Hall

Grade II listed Farnsfield Hall is a late 17th century farmhouse which was substantially altered in the late 18th century. The Watson family lived and farmed here for many generations. John Watson inherited the house in 1755 when his father William died. He had come into money and acquired large tracts of land at the time of the Farnsfield Enclosure in late 1770s. He converted the farmhouse into a style more befitting a small country landowner' house with additional rooms and a central entrance and for many years it was known as 'Watson's Folly'. Farnsfield Hall Lodge and gateway situated on Blidworth Road were added in the early 19th century.



Farnsfield Hall from a postcard post dated 1905

In the early 1800s The Hall was bought by the Houldsworth family. Originally from Gonalston, Nottinghamshire, they acquired considerable wealth as cotton mill owners in Manchester. Brothers Thomas and William Houldsworth both lived on The Hall estate. William Houldsworth (1770 - 1854) became a major landowner in and around Farnsfield and was a prominent member of the Farnsfield Association for Prosecuting Felons and the church vestry.

Thomas Houldsworth (1771 – 1852) was Conservative MP for Nottingham Northern in the 1830s and with his brother Henry, established the Coltness Iron Works in North Lanarkshire. He was also owned racehorses and a stable block was built at The Hall in around 1818. It became a successful racehorse breeding establishment with two ¾ acre walled paddocks built for the stallions. In 1823 his filly Palantine won the Lincoln Gold Cup and two other races. Her even more famous father Filho da Punta had been bought by Thomas in 1815. He went on to win nine of his twelve races, including the St Leger Stakes and Doncaster Gold Cup, before being retired to stud.

Farnsfield Hall 2024

William Houldsworth and his wife Sarah had no children and after their deaths The Hall was rented out for many years. It was bought in 1900 by Harwood Cash, passed to his son, also Harwood Cash in 1907 and to his eldest daughter Rhoda Linney in 1941. It has remained in the family ever since.